Sergei Mikhalkov

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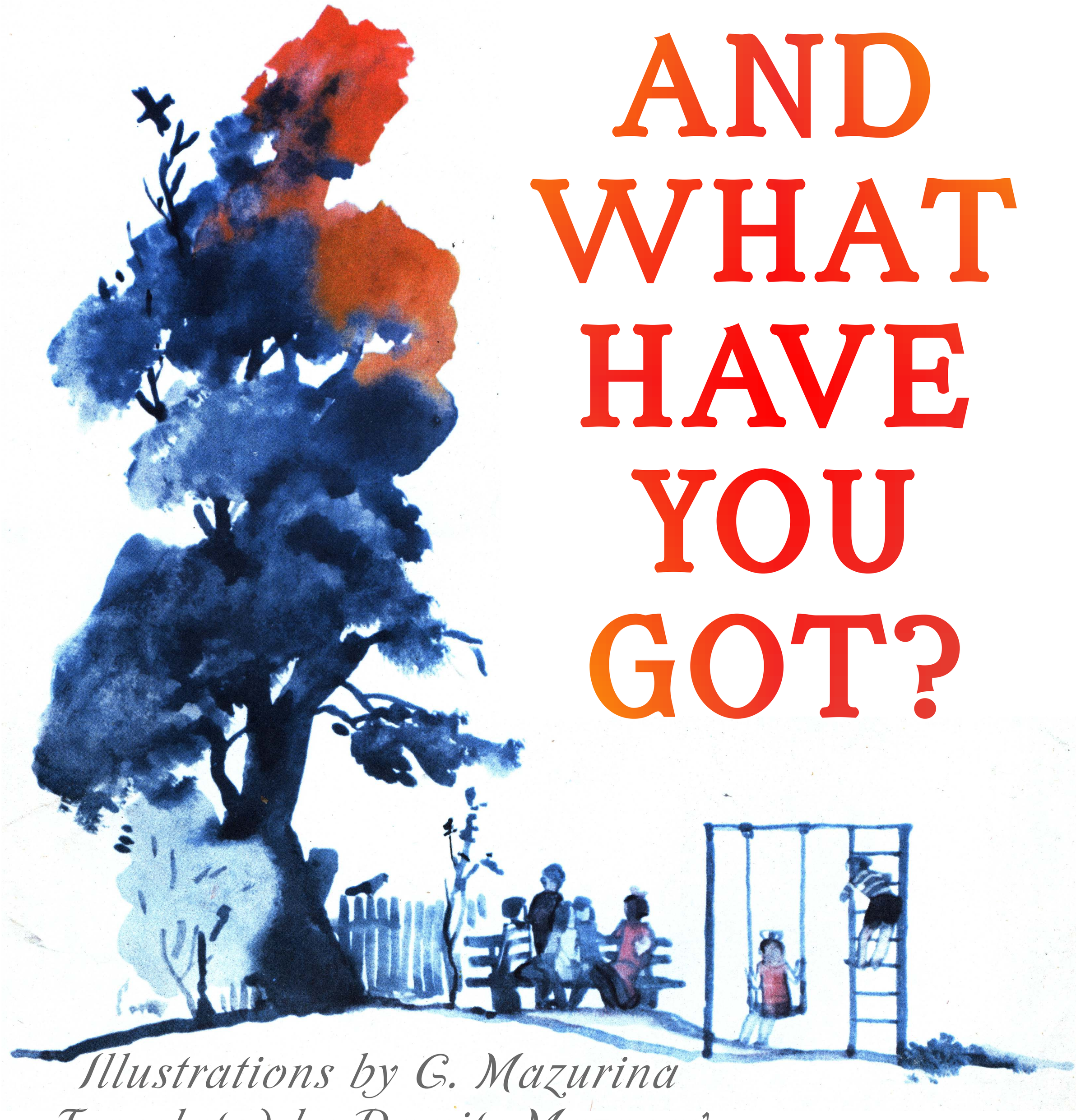

Illustrations by G. Mazurina

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Who sat upon the garden bench,
Who watched the street go by,
Tolya sang,
Boris stayed quiet,
Nikolai swung his leg.

It was evening,
There was nothing much to do.

A jackdaw perched upon the fence,
A cat climbed to the attic high.
Then young Boris told the boys,
Just like that:

"Well, I've got a nail in my pocket.
And what about you?"

"Well, we've got a visitor today.
And what about you?"

"And today our cat gave birth
to kittens yesterday.
The kittens have grown a little bit,
But they won't eat from the
saucer yet!"

"Well, we've got gas in our kitchen.
And what about you?"

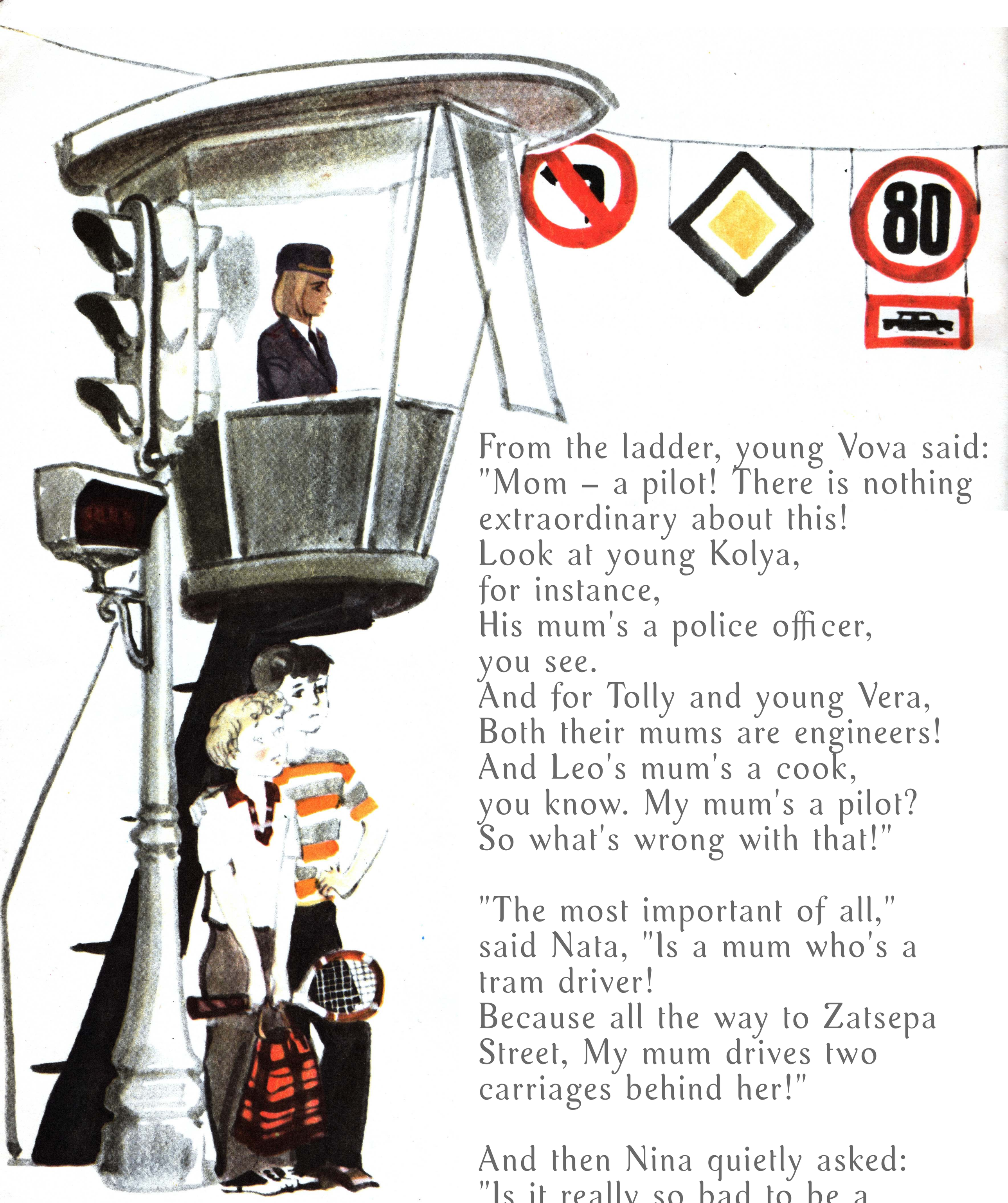
"And we've got proper running water!
There!"

And from our window, you see,
Red Square you can plainly see.
But from your little window pane,
Just a tiny bit of the street, again.

"We strolled along Neglinnaya Street,
And popped into the boulevard, you see,
They bought us a deep blue, blue,
A bright green, red balloon for me!"

"And in our house, the fire went out
– That's one!
The lorry brought some logs about
– That's two!"

"And for a fourth, our mum,
you know,
Is off on a flight, high and grand,
Because our mum, she's called
a pilot,
The best pilot in the land!"



From the ladder, young Vova said:
"Mom – a pilot! There is nothing
extraordinary about this!
Look at young Kolya,
for instance,
His mum's a police officer,
you see.
And for Tolly and young Vera,
Both their mums are engineers!
And Leo's mum's a cook,
you know. My mum's a pilot?
So what's wrong with that!"

"The most important of all,"
said Nata, "Is a mum who's a
tram driver!
Because all the way to Zatsepa
Street, My mum drives two
carriages behind her!"

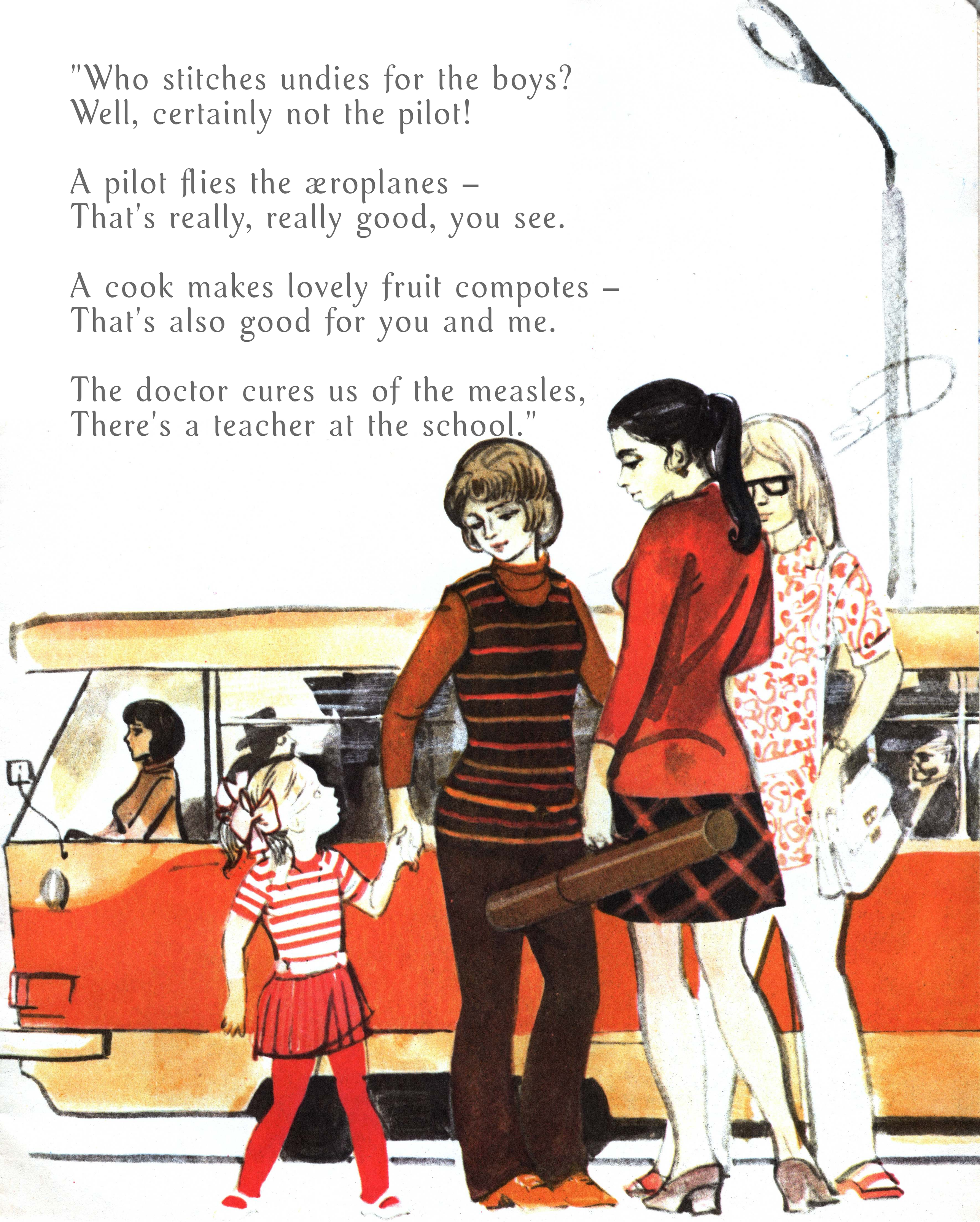
And then Nina quietly asked:
"Is it really so bad to be a
dressmaker?"

"Who stitches undies for the boys?
Well, certainly not the pilot!

A pilot flies the æroplanes –
That's really, really good, you see.

A cook makes lovely fruit compotes –
That's also good for you and me.

The doctor cures us of the measles,
There's a teacher at the school."



All sorts of mums are needed, it's true,
All sorts of mums are important for me
and for you!
It was evening,
There was nothing left to argue!

And What Have You Got?
(А ЧТО У ВАС?)
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